

REMARKS

The Office Action of August 11, 2004 has been carefully reviewed and this response addresses the concerns set forth in the Office Action. Claims 1-10, 12, 14-21, 23-26, 28, 30-40, 42 and 44-67 are pending in the application. However, claims 3, 7, 9, 20, 21, 23, 30-36 and 44-61 are withdrawn from consideration. In this response, claims 1, 6 and 37 are amended. Claims 2, 5, 8, 14-19, 24-26, 28, 40 and 64 are canceled.

In the Office Action, claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Begala (US Patent # 5,595,629). This rejection is respectfully traversed as claim 14 has been canceled herein.

Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8, 10, 12, 14-19, 24-26, 28, 37-40, 42, and 62-67 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Persson (WO 9955964) in view of Begala. This rejection is also respectfully traversed.

Persson relates to a process for improving drainage and retention comprising adding a cationic polysaccharide having a hydrophobic group, either aromatic or aliphatic, together with an anionic microparticulate material. The anionic microparticulate material is preferably anionic silica-based particles. Persson does not disclose a formaldehyde-naphtalene sulfonate condensation polymer.

Begala relates to a process for improvement of drainage and retention comprising separate addition of an anionic and a cationic polymer to a cellulosic slurry. The cationic polymer is an acrylamide or acrylate based polymer. Begala does not disclose cationic starch having an aromatic group and a quaternary ammonium group.

In the Solhage declaration, submitted in Applicants response of May 21, 2004, the teaching of Persson has been compared to the present invention. The cationic polymer according to the present invention that was used in the examples was a


cationic starch having an aromatic group as well as a quaternary group. The anionic polymer according to the present invention that was used in the examples was a formaldehyde-naphtalene sulfonate condensation polymer.

The results in the declaration clearly show that the present invention shows a significant improvement compared to the teachings of Persson. This is confirmed by the statement in the Office Action that the declaration is convincing, see page 3, line 1-3 of the Office Action, "The Solhage Declaration does provide probative evidence of unexpectedness of the invention over Persson's invention".

Begala and Persson teach the use of different cationic polymers and different anionic materials. It would not lead a person of ordinary skill in the art to combine a cationic starch having an aromatic group and a quaternary group with a formaldehyde-naphtalene sulfonate condensation polymer.

As set forth above, the presently claimed invention is both novel and non-obvious over the cited art. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the grounds for rejection set forth in the Office Action and allowance is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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